GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5650
ANSWERED ON:30.04.2003
USE OF ASBESTOS
RAM NARESH TRIPATHI

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the material which is used to manufacture drinking water pipe is injurious to human health;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to ban the use of asbestos; and

(d) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a) & (b) Asbestos pipes are commonly used for supply of drinking water. As per IPCS (1986) Environmental Health Criteria, the studies conducted to date provide little convincing evidence of an association between asbestos in public water supplies and cancer induction. Ecological epidemiological studies conducted in areas having high concentration of asbestos fibres in the drinking water supply pipes have shown no evidence of association between levels of asbestos fibres from asbestos cement pipe and the incidence of digestive tract cancer.

(c) At present, there is no proposal to ban the use of asbestos.

(e) Does not arise.